



# Master Gardener Newsletter

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## Plant of the Month

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### Red Mountain Sage (Aka Darcy's or Fiery sage / *Salvia darcyi*)

Jeff Anderson's featured plant for May is the Red Mountain, Darcy's or Fiery sage—a beautiful plant that can take 100° heat in the summer and it blooms with amazing bright-red flowers that attract hummingbirds.

According to the Sunset Western Garden Book, it is an upright, cardinal red-blooming sage that grows to 4 feet tall and spreads to 3 feet or more through rhizomes. Its soft green, triangular-shaped leaves are fruity in aroma and attractive during the brief period when the shrub is not in bloom. Flower stalks arise in early summer and bear whorls of the brilliant, two-lipped flowers that require a protected location, as it is brittle and susceptible to frost.

This sage blooms continuously in full sun or partial shade until late fall, making it a showstopper, but it must be grown with moderate water in a wind-protected location.

This is a sleeper sage for the Mesilla Valley; you might avoid it after a quick glance at its climate zones (ours is 10)—it is recommended for central and southern California (zones 8, 9, 12, 14-24) and nowhere in New Mexico (zones 1-3, 10). Darcy sage was originally introduced from Mexico's biologically rich Sierra Madre Occidental by Yucca Do Nursery plant collectors in the early 1990s, according to one source, and its adaptability is still being discovered by nurseries around the U.S. and Europe.

Experimentation is the key to expanding plant ranges, knowledge, and opportunity. Jackye Meinecke from Enchanted Gardens enthusiastically recommends the Darcy sage. "It started appearing on growers' lists about three years ago and until I could watch it for a few years to check its frost hardiness, we sold it as a "patio plant" (which is a euphemism for annual in this climate). I grow it along a protected wall, cut it back after stems die in winter, and it bounces back beautifully to bloom all summer long in extreme heat. We don't have these plants right now, but I do keep a 'mother plant' and we will be producing cuttings by fall."

Red Mountain/Darcy sage promises to be a sturdy Mesilla Valley favorite in roomy courtyards, along stonewalls, in mixed shrub borders, and to serve hungry hummingbirds.

*Please submit information & articles for the June newsletter to Ann Shine-Ring by the 25th of May:  
Contact Info:  
[asring@hughes.net](mailto:asring@hughes.net)  
(575) 640-7177*

—This article is continued on Page 9—

## How Many Veggies?

*Excerpt from Garden Gate Magazine, June 2009*

Did you ever wonder how many vegetable plants to buy when planning your garden? The chart below shows the number of individual plants you'll need to plant for fresh eating. Some veggies have tiny seeds, so for those we've listed the number of feet of row to plant and how to thin the seedlings. If you want to can or freeze some, or you just really like a vegetable, you'll want to plant more than is suggested.

The chart also includes about how many plants can be grown per foot of row so you can figure out how much space you'll need. In general, multiply the number of plants per person by 3 or 4 for a family-sized planting, except for vine crops like cucumbers or squash. We've done the work for you in adjusting the numbers of all these plants so at harvest you aren't buried in delicious veggies.

CROP		PER PERSON	FAMILY OF 4
Asparagus	(1 plant/ft. of row)	5-10 plants	25 plants
Bush beans	(2 plants/ft. of row)	12-15 plants	45 plants
Beets	(Thin to 3 plants/ft. of row)	5-10 ft.	30 ft.
Cucumber	(1 plant/2 ft. of row)	1 vine 2 bushes	2 vines 4 bushes
Carrots	(Thin to 12 plants/ft. of row)	4 ft.	12 ft.
Corn	(1 plant/ft. of row)	10-15 plants	40 plants (plant in blocks for best pollination)
Eggplant	(1 plant/2 ft. of row)	2-3 plants	7 plants
Leaf lettuce	(Thin to 3 plants/ft. of row)	8 ft.	26 ft.
Melon	(1 plant/6 ft. of row)	1-2 plants	4 plants
Onion	(4 sets/ft. of row)	12-20 sets	80-100 sets
Peas	(6 plants/ft. of row)	15-20 plants	70 plants
Peppers	(1 plant/ft. of row)	3-5 plants	8-10 plants
Potatoes	(1 plant/ft. of row)	10 plants	40 plants
Spinach	(Thin to 6 plants/ft. of row)	5-10 ft.	30 ft.
Squash	(1 plant/6 ft. of row)	1-2 plants	3 plants
Tomatoes	(1 plant/2 ft. of row)	2-4 plants	4-6 plants
Zucchini	(1 plant/3 ft. of row)	1-2 plants	4 plants



Bush Bean 'Rolande'  
 Eggplant 'Little Prince'  
 Chard 'Scarlet Charlotte'  
 Chard 'Pot of Gold'  
 Cucumber 'Baby Persian'  
 Lettuce 'Garden Babies'  
 Lettuce 'Monet's Garden Mesclun'  
 Pepper 'Pizza My Heart'  
 Radish 'Easter Egg'  
 Scallion 'Delicious Duo'  
 Spinach 'Catalina'  
 Tomato 'Super Bush'  
 Zucchini 'Trombetta'

## Vegetable Varieties for Containers

Excerpt from April 2009 Horticulture Magazine

Author: Alice McGowan

### Short on space and sun? You can still grow veggies.

Vegetable gardening is possible even in yards with less than ideal conditions. You can find veggies that match the sun available in your garden, and increase your space with containers and other tricks.

Is it possible to grow fresh veggies in a city apartment with a small balcony, or on a deck that only receives a few hours of sunlight all day? Can veggies thrive in containers when there's no open ground available? Here's how space-challenged gardeners in any setting can maximize what they've got.

### Know Your Resources

If your site receives six hours or more of sun daily, then you can grow tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, and squash. Southern exposure is best, but if you do receive limited amounts of eastern or western light over the course of the day, this can add up. Even northern exposure will do if the path of sunlight is unobstructed and lasts sufficiently.

Veggies grown primarily for their roots and flowers, (e.g. radishes, beets, carrots, broccoli and cauliflower) require less sunlight and can get by with about four hours of sun. Also, with little as three hours of sun each day, you can successfully grow leafy vegetables (e.g. radicchio, arugula, spinach, kale, chard, and mustard greens).

All vegetables perform best with rich, well-drained soil; so don't skimp on the soil you provide them. Enrich loam with compost and fertilizer. Use an organic, slow-release formula. If you plant veggies in a container, then mix up half compost with any potting soil you use. In addition, put diluted fertilizer in the water you give plants throughout the season.

### Maximize Your Space

You can maximize both available space and light by "going up". Training plants that vine to grow vertically increases available space on the ground for other crops. It's also likely that vertical supports will enable plants to reach more sunlight. Whether planted in containers or in the ground, bear in mind each plant's eventual height. Then situate everything to the best use of available light, so taller crops don't cast shade on shorter ones.

—This article is continued on Page 6—



Leafcutter Bee (Species: *Magachile* ssp.)



Adult female leafcutter bees cut round to oval disks from the margins of plant leaves. The damage is considered a nuisance since the plants are rarely damaged. However, ardent rose growers often find the leaf damage unacceptable. These bees also seem to prefer other landscape plants, such as azalea, lilacs, green ash, Virginia creeper, redbud and maple leaves.

## LEAFCUTTER BEES

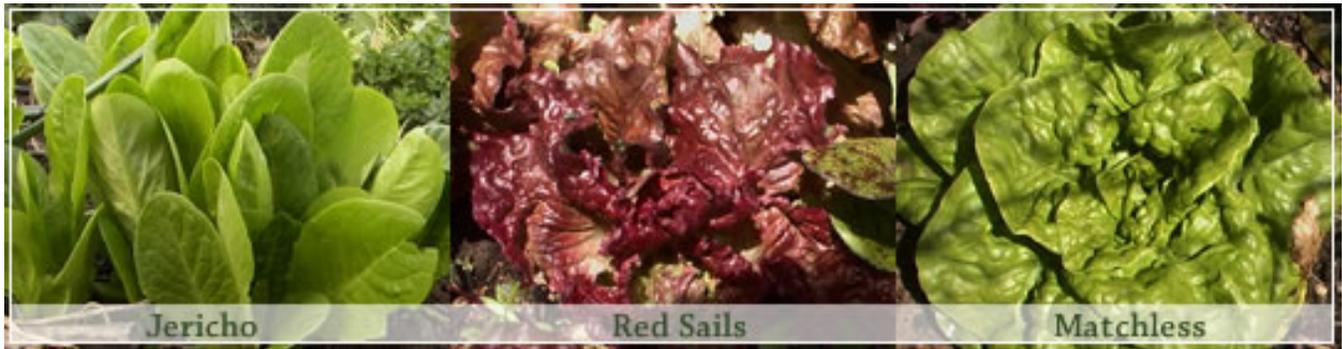
Information provided by Whitney Cranshaw, Entomologist of Colorado State University Extension & provided by Ohio State University

### Quick Facts About Leafcutter Bees

- They are native bees and are important pollinators throughout the United States.
- They are not aggressive and have a mild sting that is used only when they are handled; the sting is much less painful than that of honeybees or yellow jacket wasps.
- They cut the leaves of plants in a characteristic half-moon shape. The cut leaf fragments are used to form nest cells.
- They nest in soft, rotted wood or in the stems of large, pithy plants, such as roses.
- They often are essential pollinators of wild plants. Some leafcutter bees are even semi-domesticated to help produce alfalfa seed. However, their habit of leaf cutting, as well as their nesting in soft wood or plant stems, often attracts attention and concern.

### Life History and Habits

- Most common leafcutter bees are approximately the size of the common honeybee, although they are somewhat darker with light bands on the abdomen. They also have different habits.
- Leafcutter bees are solitary bees, meaning that they don't produce colonies as do social insects, (e.g., honeybees, yellow jackets, ants, etc.). Instead, individual female leafcutter bees do all the work of rearing. This includes digging out nesting areas, creating nest cells and providing their young with food. After a nest is made, the bees collect fragments of leaves to construct individual nest cells. The bees cut leaves in a distinctive manner, making a smooth semicircular cut about 3/4 inch in diameter from the edge of leaves.
- Adult females may live up to two months & lay some 35 to 40 eggs during this time.
- Leafcutter bees nest in soft, rotted wood, thick-stemmed, pithy plants (e.g., rose); and in similar materials that the bees can easily cut through and excavate. Nest tunnels may extend several inches deep and coarse sawdust may be deposited at the entrance. This sometimes causes confusion with other wood-nesting insects such as carpenter ants. However, leafcutter bees restrict their tunneling to soft, rotted wood and do not cause damage to homes or other wooden structures.
- There also are concerns about leafcutter bee nesting in rose canes, excavating the pith of pruned canes. Leafcutter bees sometimes nest in the largest diameter rose canes but cause little damage because they restrict tunneling to the pith and rarely girdle cambium. Furthermore, other insects, including various hunting wasps (*Pemphredon* species) and small carpenter bees more commonly tunnel and nest in rose canes.
- To prevent leafcutter bees from tunneling into rose canes, seal exposed pith as canes are pruned. This can be easily achieved by placing a thumbtack, bit of sealing wax or white glue on the opening.
- These bees do not eat the cut pieces of leaves that they remove. Instead, they carry them back to the nest and use them to fashion nest cells within the previously constructed tunnels. A finished nest tunnel may contain a dozen or more cells forming a tube 4 to 8 inches long. The young bees develop and remain within the cells, emerging the next season.
- There are a great many parasites that act as important natural enemies of leafcutter bees. As a result, leaf cutting activity may vary widely from year to year. Parasitic bees and wasps, velvet ants and certain blister beetles are among the most important enemies of leafcutter bees and other solitary bees.
- Insecticides are ineffective for preventing leaf cutting. The only known control of leaf injuries is to cover susceptible plants with cheesecloth or other loose netting during periods when leafcutter bees are most active. However, the Maryland Rose Society Newsletter suggests a possible solution to deter these bees. It said to, "Mix one teaspoon of flea and tick shampoo and add one tablespoon of ammonia to one gallon of water. Mix well and spray this mixture on your rose bushes. The bees hate the smell of this mix and won't attack the foliage."



## Summer Lettuce

*Information provided by Darrol Shillingburg, Doña Ana County Extension Master Gardener*

Now is the time to switch the varieties of lettuce you are growing to those that will remain sweet through the heat of summer. Here are a few varieties that I have experimented with and found to be dependable.

### VARIETIES

**Jericho** – an open headed romaine developed in Israel that remains sweet at temperatures in the low 100's, is slow to bolt and remains sweet while bolting, until the flowers open. It is also very cold tolerant.

**Matchless** – a true bib lettuce that remains sweet and soft in summer and grows vigorously in our alkaline soil.

**Red Sails** – a loose leaf lettuce with beautiful color – does not tolerate drought well, but remains soft if given adequate water.

**Nevada** – a Batavia type that seems slower growing than the other varieties, but has excellent flavor and texture.

**Craquerelle du Midi** – a romaine that grows vigorously and is fairly drought tolerant.

### CULTIVATION

Growing good lettuce in summer requires a little different approach to cultivation than during gentler times.

**Germination** – Lettuce seed will go dormant at about 80°F, and since it requires light to germinate getting it started in summer can be challenging. The cues to germinate are moisture and a cool temperature, which can be met by placing the seed on a moist paper towel and holding it bagged for 2-3 days. After cueing, the seed cannot return to "dormancy" and can be sown in warm soils with good germination. I have had good results in summer by starting lettuce in six packs. For a continuous supply of high quality lettuce, start seeds every two weeks.

**Transplanting** – It is best to transplant them young, when they have 3-4 true leaves, and provide afternoon shade until they establish a vigorous root system. Mulching helps keep the soil cooler and more evenly moist.

**Growing** – Adequate water is essential to maintain table quality. Lettuce that is water or nutrient stressed will be tough and bitter. Afternoon shade and some wind protection make it easier to grow high quality lettuce. When the lettuce starts to mature, cut the entire plant a couple of inches above the soil – for a "cut and come" second harvest or just below the soil to make room for new transplants.

**Harvesting** – I have had excellent results by carefully picking the outer (larger) leaves rather than waiting for the entire plant to reach maturity or using the "cut and come" method.

### SOURCES

[The Cooks Garden](#) – Carries all varieties, except Jericho, along with others and a "Summer Lettuce" Mixture.

[Seeds of Change](#) – Carries Jericho

**Vegetable Varieties for Containers – Continued**  
 (From Page 3)

Some candidates for training up are pole beans, peas, most tomatoes, cucumbers and vining summer squash, such as Tromboncini. Don't waste valuable space on wide aisles. Narrow spacing between rows necessitates greater care when weeding and harvesting, but that's a small price to pay for increased planting space.

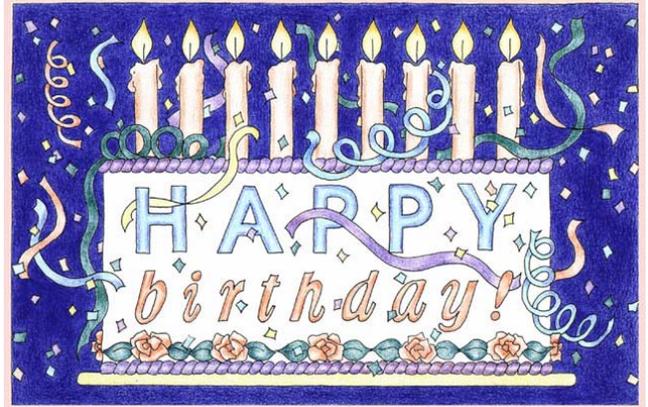
Combine larger, slower growing crops with small, quick ones. Try filling the spaces between leeks and cabbages with quick plantings of mesclun mix, radishes, scallions or cilantro.

**Make the Most of Time**

When space for gardening is limited, it's essential to use the entire season well. The spot you use for spinach or lettuce in April or May can be devoted to carrots or beets once the greens are harvested in June. Start as early as the soil can be worked. In spring and fall, take advantage of plants that are naturally tolerant of frost. Spinach, lettuces, and kale withstand considerable cold when they've had a chance to adjust gradually. Leeks survive light frosts, but suffer in quality when temperatures get rally cold. Carrots, parsnips and Brussels sprouts actually improve in flavor after a few light frosts because cold encourages transformation of their starches to sugar.

An economy cloche fashioned from old lampshades and leftover scraps of poly can protect individual plants particularly in early spring. Floating row covers are another way to protect plants and can cover entire garden rows.

The limitations of your gardening circumstances can be overcome with your own creative solutions and strategies. ■



- |                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Annette Froehlich | May 7  |
| Dixie LaRock      | May 13 |
| Katrin Sumpter    | May 13 |
| Sandra Resch      | May 14 |
| Ann Palormo       | May 20 |
| Marcena Thompson  | May 30 |

**MANY THANKS  
 FOR THE GOODIES:**  
 We appreciate your thoughtfulness

May Goodies  
 Kelly Covert  
 Evicta Harvey  
 Hope Movsesian  
 Janice Servais

June Goodies  
 Frank Connor  
 Laurie Davidson  
 Joan Lane



© Charles Mann

## DROUGHT-TOLERANT PLANTS

Excerpt From Garden Gate Magazine, August 2007

Many perennials have special mechanisms to help them survive, especially when it comes to drought. Some have deep roots that go down where the soil stays cool and moist much longer than it does near the surface. Or they may have fleshy tubers that store water to be used in times of drought. Other plants have waxy leaves so moisture won't evaporate out very fast. Still others have fuzzy leaves to protect them from the drying sun and wind.

Here is a list of 52 perennials that will grow fine in dry conditions. However, no plant can survive without *any* moisture. Even if they are tolerant of dry soil, make sure to keep all plants well watered until they're fully established in your garden. And they'll do better with a deep watering when you see them beginning to wilt.

PLANT NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMENTS
Agastache	<i>Agastache</i> spp. and hybrids	Spikes of lavender, pink or orange in summer
Ajuga <i>Ajuga</i>	<i>Reptans</i>	Ground cover with green, bronze or variegated foliage; spikes of blue or pink flowers in spring
Anthemis	<i>Anthemis tinctoria</i>	Yellow or white daisies much of the summer
Artemisia	<i>Artemisia versicolor</i> 'Seafoam'	Low mat of fine-textured silver-gray foliage; most other artemisias are also drought tolerant
Baby's breath	<i>Gypsophila paniculata</i>	Billows of tiny white flowers in summer
Basket-of-gold	<i>Aurinia saxatilis</i>	Low mat of bright-yellow flowers in early spring
Bearded iris	<i>Iris</i> hybrid	Wide variety of colors in late spring
Bishop's weed	<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i> 'Variegatum'	Vigorous ground cover with variegated leaves
Blanket flower	<i>Gaillardia grandiflora</i>	Mahogany-red flowers with yellow edges much of the summer; most blanket flower species are drought tolerant
Butterfly weed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Glowing orange flowers in summer
Candytuft	<i>Iberis sempervirens</i>	Low clumps of white flowers mid- to late spring
Catmint	<i>Nepeta</i> spp.	Spikes of lavender-blue flowers in late spring
Cushion spurge	<i>Euphorbia polychroma</i>	Dome-shaped mound with bright-yellow bracts in late spring
Daylily	<i>Hemerocallis</i> hybrids	Wide variety of colors that bloom mostly in summer
False indigo	<i>Baptisia australis</i>	Spikes of deep-blue flowers in late spring
Garden pinks	<i>Dianthus gratianopolitanus</i>	Mounds of fragrant pink flowers in late spring
Gaura	<i>Gaura lindheimeri</i>	Tall spires of pink or white flowers in summer
Gazania	<i>Gazania</i> spp.	Shades of orange and yellow in early spring
Germander	<i>Teucrium chamaedrys</i>	Pale-pink to deep-purple flowers in late summer
Globe thistle	<i>Echinops ritro</i>	Globes of metallic-blue flowers in summer
Goldenrod	<i>Solidago</i> spp.	Sprays of golden-yellow flowers in late summer
Hardy ice plant	<i>Delosperma cooperi</i>	Ground cover with bright-pink flowers all summer
Hyssop	<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i>	Spikes of blue or pink flowers in midsummer

## Drought-Tolerant Plants - Continued

PLANT NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMENTS
Jupiter's beard	<i>Centranthus ruber</i>	Rosy pink flowers in late spring
Lamb's ears	<i>Stachys byzantina</i>	Mounds of gray leaves and spikes of magenta flowers in summer
Lavender	<i>Lavender</i> spp.	Spikes of fragrant blue-purple flowers in summer
Lavender cotton	<i>Santolina chamaecyparissus</i>	Yellow button flowers in summer; aromatic gray foliage
Mallow	<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	Mauve-purple flowers with stripes on the outside in late summer
Missouri primrose	<i>Oenothera macrocarpa</i>	Large yellow flowers much of the summer; most <i>Oenothera</i> species are drought tolerant
Mullein	<i>Verbascum bombyciferum</i>	Tall spires of yellow flowers in mid- to late summer
Orange globemallow	<i>Sphaeralcea munroana</i>	Wands of orange flowers in midsummer
Oriental poppy	<i>Papaver orientale</i>	Often brightly colored papery flowers in spring
Ornamental onion	<i>Allium senescens</i>	Lavender or pink flowers in late summer; most alliums are drought tolerant
Penstemon	<i>Penstemon</i> spp. and hybrids	Large family of drought-tolerant plants with spike flowers in many colors
Peony	<i>Paeonia lactiflora</i>	Mounds of white, pink or red flowers in spring
Poppy mallow	<i>Callirhoe involucrata</i>	Wine-red, white -eyed flowers much of the summer
Prairie zinnia	<i>Zinnia grandiflora</i>	Deep-yellow flowers from late summer into fall
Purple coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Carmine-pink daisies in late summer
Red hot poker	<i>Kniphofia uvaria</i>	Orange and yellow spikes in summer
Rough blazing star	<i>Liatris aspera</i>	Spikes of rosy purple flowers in summer
Russian sage	<i>Perovskia atriplicifolia</i>	Spires of lavender-violet flowers in late summer
Sage	<i>Salvia</i> spp.	Spikes of blue, pink or white flowers in summer; many drought-tolerant species and hybrids
Sea lavender	<i>Limonium latifolium</i>	Airy panicles of lavender-blue flowers in late summer
Snow-in-summer	<i>Cerastium tomentosum</i>	Gray-foliaged ground cover with white flowers in late spring
Stokes' aster	<i>Stokesia laevis</i>	Lavender-blue or pink chrysanthemum-like flowers in summer
Tall sedum	<i>Sedum spectabile</i>	Flat clusters of pink, white or rust in late summer
Threadleaf coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis verticillata</i>	Small yellow daisies much of the summer
Thyme	<i>Thymus serpyllum</i>	Mat-forming ground cover with pink or white flowers in spring; most thyme species are drought tolerant
Verbena	<i>Verbena bipinnatifida</i>	Magenta-pink flowers all summer; many other verbena species are drought tolerant
Veronica	<i>Veronica spicata</i>	Spikes of blue, pink or white flowers in summer
Yarrow	<i>Achillea filipendulina</i>	Dark-yellow flower clusters in summer
Yucca	<i>Yucca</i> spp.	Tall spires of creamy white flowers in summer; spiky evergreen foliage





## PLANTS THAT ATTRACT BUTTERFLIES

*Excerpt from Backyard Living, March 2009*

<u>Perennials</u>	<u>Annuals</u>
Agastache	Floss flower
Aster	Globe amaranth
Butterfly bush	Heliotrope
Butterfly weed	Lantana
Candytuft	Moss rose
Chrysanthemum	Salvia
Coreopsis	Sweet alyssum
Delphinium	Sweet William
Dianthus	Zinnia
Gaillardia	
Goldenrod	
Liatris	
Oregano	
Penstemon	
Phlox	
Purple coneflower	
Rudbeckia	
Salvia	
Scabopsa	
Sea pink	
Sedum	
Verbena	
Veronica	
Wallflower	
Yarrow	



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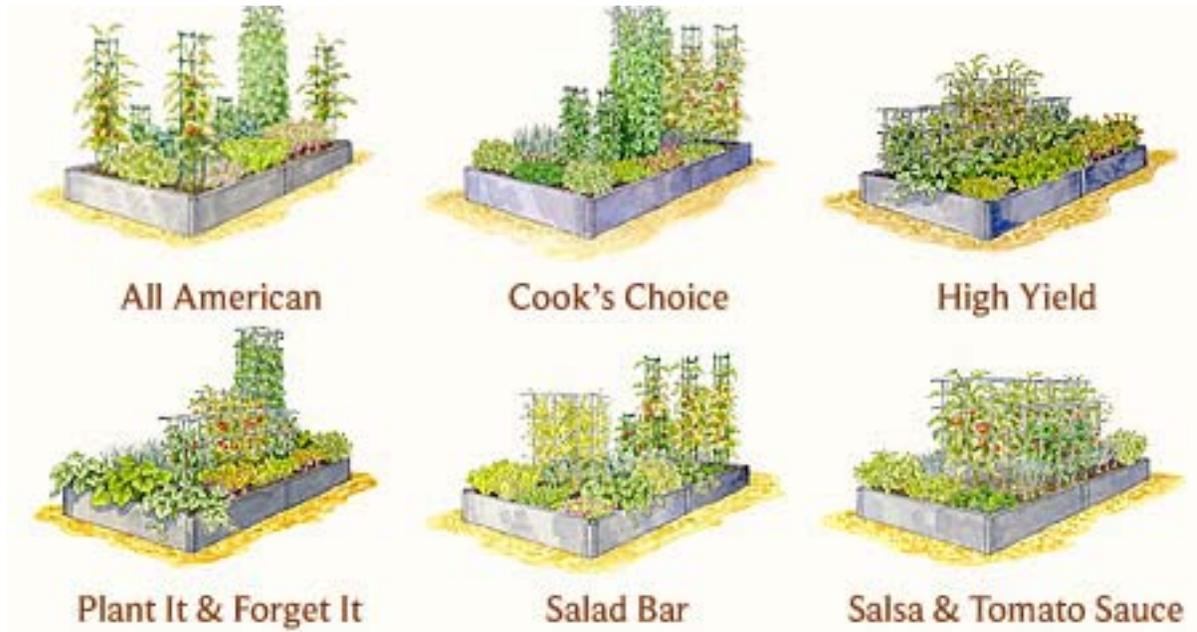
**Red Mountain / Darcy's Sage / Fiery Sage**

### Other Facts:

- Family: Lamiaceae (mint family)
- Genus: Salvia
- Height: 4-6 feet; Spacing: 24-36 inches
- Sun Exposure: Full sun or sun to partial shade
- Duration: Perennial
- Foliage: Deciduous
- Propagation: Seeds; spreads by stolons
- Bloom Times: January, August, September and October (very showy crimson flowers from July to October)
- Soil pH Requirements:  
7.6 to 7.8 (mildly alkaline) 7.9 to 8.5 (alkaline)
- Average Water Needs: Water regularly but do not overwater. It is drought tolerant and suitable for xeriscaping
- Attractive to bees, butterflies and/or birds. This plant is disease and insect-free and adaptable to a variety of sites. ■

*(A special thank you to MG Intern, Joan Woodward, who researched this plant for the newsletter.)*

## Grow Your Own Fresh, Organic Food in a 3' x 6' Raised Bed Garden!



### GREAT, FREE GARDENING RESOURCES

*From Gardeners' Supply*

Gardeners' Supply has a fun and easy interactive Kitchen Gardener Planner Program that you can access at [www.gardeners.com](http://www.gardeners.com). They have several freebies for you:

- ✧ A set of six pre-planned gardens that include a planting map with information about each of the crops listed in each of the above gardens.
- ✧ A "Design Your Own Garden" Program
- ✧ Step-by-step Planting and Care Guides
- ✧ Vegetable Encyclopedia
- ✧ A list of supplies and accessories to help you in your gardening project.

## Dixie's Honey Do List for May



**Spring is here. Plant, plant, plant, feed, feed, feed, water, water, water – you know the drill. Enjoy!**

### In General:

For those of you who live in sparsely populated areas, cut down dried grasses and weeds that are growing within 10 feet of your house or nearby in vacant areas. This will help prevent fires from encroaching onto your property.

### Ornamentals

- Continue planting container grown plants but provide extra water and shade as May temperatures rise.
- For spring and summer flowering bedding plants, fertilize every 2 to 4 weeks using a product with higher phosphorus content.
- As irises complete their bloom period reduce irrigation to allow rhizomes to “rest.”
- Continue to fertilize bulbs until leaves begin to die back, and then discontinue for the rest of the summer.
- Deadhead flowers.
- Pinch back chrysanthemums and others to maintain a compact form.
- Separate yucca and agave “pups” from parent plant. Allow agave pups to dry in the shade for a few days before replanting.

### Fruits and Nuts

- Increase watering frequency as temperatures rise and water to a depth of 18 inches.
- Continue zinc sprays to pecans.
- Continue cover sprays to pome fruits.
- Harvest fruit as soon as it ripens and remove buggy or diseased fruit promptly.
- Protect young trees from sunburn with shade cloth or tree wrap.
- As temperatures rise, begin planting palm trees. Water newly planted palms frequently until established, then reduce frequency to about once every 2 weeks.
- Fertilize established palms with a product formulated specifically for palms. Call Frank Connor (382.3430) for professional advice.



### Vegetables

- Pinch back side shoots on tomatoes to increase fruit production.
- Shade plants to reduce beet leafhopper pressure and sunburn.
- Lightly fertilize summer herbs such as basil, oregano, and mints.
- Plant sweet potato slips.
- Continue planting other summer vegetables such as corn and squash.
- Keep an eye open for signs of curly top on tomatoes and peppers. Remove infected plants promptly.



## Dixie's Honey Do List for May- Continued

### Lawns

- Continue planting warm season turf species--keep plantings moist not soggy.
- Fertilize established warm season turf. Apply 1 lb N/1000 ft<sup>2</sup>.
- After mid-month, discontinue fertilization of cool season grasses.
- Depending on temperatures and winds, water at least once a week to a depth of 6"-8"
- Mow as needed to maintain desired turf quality. Mowing height also influences rooting depth so mow at the greatest height recommended for your turf species.
- If needed, apply a pre-emergent herbicide to established turf for control of late summer weeds. READ THE LABEL CAREFULLY! Water turf well after applying herbicide.



### Roses



- Continue to deadhead spent blooms at a 5-leaflet leaf.
- Spray off aphids with a hose, but only early in the morning or you will burn the leaves.
- Remember to remove dead roses at a 5-leaflet leaf.
- Apply mulch around the base of each rose to deter insects and keep moisture in.
- As temperatures rise, use a slow-release granular fertilizer on roses or discontinue fertilization completely until September.

### Miscellaneous

- Watch out for hornworms/corn earworm and other caterpillars. Handpick or treat with an appropriate B.t. (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) preparation. Always apply under calm wind conditions for safest and effective control.
- As temperatures rise, so do spider mite populations. Put a sheet of white paper under a suspect stem or leaf, tap the leaf, and look for tiny red specks scurrying around on the paper. Blast plant with water or spray with an appropriate insecticide.
- Take time to record successes and failures of cool season crops in a garden journal. Also note current crop growth and development.

### **DID YOU KNOW? Save trees, get fewer catalogs!**

When seed catalogs start to fill up your mailbox, don't you wish you could do some thinning? Now you can. Visit Catalog Choice at [www.catalogchoice.org](http://www.catalogchoice.org) and choose to stop receiving catalogs you have duplicates of, or just don't want. Use your customer number from the mailing label for the best success. If the catalog you're looking for isn't there, you can suggest that it be added. The service is free, and Catalog Choice will not sell, rent or share your information with anyone else.

## **New Master Gardener Profile: Nancy DeLouise**



Nancy has called Las Cruces home for 16 years. She lives in a house that she describes as "under constant remodeling" on a 1/3-acre chunk of land in Fairacres Estates, an old mobile home neighborhood near Guacamole's on the west side of the city. Along with her remodeling projects, Nancy's gardens are constantly changing but she looks forward to it all being done in the next few years.

Nancy has been an active gardener for 49 years. "I started out by playing under and in the bushes. I was an early tree climber," she says. "I propagated my first plant before I was ten and felt terribly sad when we moved and my Mom wouldn't let me bring the plant. It had grown quite large by then."

"My mother was a fabulous gardener. Our yards were always filled with flowers and vegetables. When I finally left the nest I put in my own vegetable gardens and blackberries wherever I lived," says Nancy. Later Nancy started to include roses and flowers and now she has a vegetable garden, fruit trees and native plants. One day she hopes to put in raspberries. Nancy's goal is to have a year-round vegetable garden and she says she is getting close.

While Nancy doesn't have a specialty, she loves trees and wants to put in a few more. She has always loved vegetable gardening, irises and roses but now she is branching out to try grasses and native plants that are happy here in the desert.

Nancy says she signed up for the Master Gardener program because it was important for her to know more about how gardening works here. She says that it is much different than the gardening she did previously in Southern California. She wants to be a responsible gardener and to know what is supposed to grow here and how to save water yet have a full garden.

Nancy runs a one-person home improvement business. Each day and each season offers her different work, which motivates her to learn new skills. She likes the variety and always tries to do a great job at whatever she does.

Nancy has always been involved in art. She took up drawing and oil painting as a child, and ceramics as a teenager. At UCLA, where she earned her Bachelors Degree in Art, she studied sculpture, ceramics and painting. At NMSU, Nancy earned her Masters Degree in Metalsmithing.

When Nancy was about four, she went on her first camping trip with her parents, two older sisters and baby brother. "We went to all the national parks in California and later when I was older, we branched out to other nearby states such as Arizona and Oregon," she says. "Nothing impressed me more than Sequoia and Yosemite with their huge Sequoia trees, gigantic rocks and many waterfalls. Those places became for me the ideal of beauty."

Nancy has many interests beyond traveling, camping, gardening and remodeling. She enjoys genealogy, art, reading and cooking. She also enjoys being an aunt. Her sisters and brother all have children. The oldest nieces have two children each now. Nancy's parents have enjoyed great-grandparent status for almost a decade.

# Master Gardener Matters

## Native Grapes of New Mexico Presentation

On April 15<sup>th</sup>, we spent the morning of tax day in a pleasant meeting with a really good educational program on native grapes of New Mexico presented by Bernd Maier, viticulturist with the Extension Service. He stated that there are five native grape species in New Mexico, only one of which, *Vitis acerifolia*, Maple Leaf or Bush grape, has grapes that are used to make wine. It's unusual because the juice itself is red. It's very winter hardy and is found in the Ute Lake area of New Mexico.

The most common native grape is *Vitis arizonica* or Canyon grape. It's very drought tolerant but the grapes are so full of tannic acid that even the birds won't eat them. *Vitis berlandieri*, Heller's or Fall grape is lime tolerant and is very important in root stock growth. *Vitis riparia*, Riverbank grape, and *Vitis rupestris*, Mountain grape are the other two native grapes, neither of which are very common nor used commercially.

The grapes Maier recommended for home use are Spur (sometimes called Superior) Seedless, Centennial, Flame Seedless, Red Globe, Crimson Seedless, and Christmas Rose. He doesn't recommend Thompson Seedless, as gibberellic acid must be used to enlarge these grapes.

As for pruning, leave a spur that was on a fruitful cane last year and remove canes that were not fruitful. Maier suggested using 15-15-15 fertilizer and agreed that putting paper or fabric bags over the grapes to protect from birds has worked. There are several publications on the Extension website if you'd like to learn more. Next month our speaker will be Barbara Arispe who will talk about container gardening.

## Hotline Duty

If you're working the MG hotline, please remember to put your name on any contact sheets that you fill out. Next month Craig Severy will give us a report on the spreadsheet he has developed using the last seven years of hotline questions and answers. Linda Fredrickson, [lindapfred@aol.com](mailto:lindapfred@aol.com) is working on developing informational sheets on trees of which we've received hotline calls in the past. Please contact Linda if you would like to help her.

## MG Newsletter

Ann Shine-Ring is doing a great job on the newsletter. She would like to encourage everyone to research a topic for the newsletter. If you are interested in doing a one-page information sheet on a particular plant of the month, contact Ann at [asring@hughes.net](mailto:asring@hughes.net). Articles are due by the 28<sup>th</sup> of the month for the next newsletter.

## School Programs

Mesquite Elementary has invited the master gardeners to its garden dedication on May 5<sup>th</sup>. More information will be forthcoming.

## Farmers' Markets

Opportunities are still available for the May 16 and June 13 Farmer's Markets from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm. Notify Barb Sallach, [bsallach@nmsu.edu](mailto:bsallach@nmsu.edu), if you would like to volunteer.

## MG Plant Sale

Our plant sale went very well on April 18<sup>th</sup>. We earned \$830 and had a lot of fun talking plants with our neighbors.

## Garden Expo at Enchanted Gardens

Dee Davis reports that our Expo in March also went very well and everyone had lots of fun. Another expo is tentatively planned for September.

## **Master Gardener Matters - Continued**

### Garden Tours on May 16<sup>th</sup>

The Annual Tour of Gardens is scheduled for Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup> and there is still room for volunteers. Contact Jeff Anderson at [lantz@nmsu.edu](mailto:lantz@nmsu.edu), if you'd like to volunteer. Volunteers receive a free ticket to the Tour.

### Other Announcements

On May 15<sup>th</sup> there is a workshop sponsored by the Native Plant Society of NM on Becoming Rain Keepers at the New Mexico Educators' Federal Credit Union Training Center and selected gardens in Albuquerque.

Also on May 16<sup>th</sup>, an open house will be held at the Arboretum Tomé in Los Lunas from 9:30 am – 4 pm.

Our next monthly meeting is May 20<sup>th</sup>. We hope to see you there!

Barb and Juliet

Next Monthly Meeting of the Doña Ana County Master Gardeners



Wednesday, May 20, 2009

9-11am Cooperative Extension Office

### **CREATE YOUR OWN GARDEN MEMOIR**

*By Katie Lamar Jackson (Author, Editor & Photographer, Auburn University School of Agriculture)*

Memoirs seem to have taken over the book market in recent years, so why not follow this trend by writing your own garden's memoir. The idea is not only trendy; it can be incredibly useful for you and invaluable to those who inherit your love of gardening or even your garden spot.

A garden memoir does not require great literary talent. It can be as simple as a garden log in which you list gardening tasks and keep records of your gardening activities. It can be kept in a garden journal, a calendar, notebook, organizer, or computer.

The garden memoir can include information on what you've planted and where you planted it, how each plant or variety performed, weather conditions, the source of plant material, pest problems, what fertilizers or chemicals were used, who visited, and what critters visited the garden, and so much more.

You can also collect photos of your garden through the seasons and years, make sketches or add landscaping blueprints or designs to the notebook. You can even include recipes for particularly yummy dishes made from your garden's bounty. The options are endless and completely up to you.

While you're at it, make a gardening life list. Write down a list of ten or more things you'd like to accomplish in your gardening life. Check off goals as they are accomplished and add new goals at any time. It is amazing how, when you write dreams down, they come true.

Perhaps the biggest hurdle to keeping your garden's memoir intact is having the journal handy when you want to write or refer to it. Find a safe but easy-to-access place for it. To keep it from getting soaked or soiled by rain, sprinklers or mud, place it in a plastic bag or use waterproof paper.

Through the years this memoir will be a great asset to you and also a great gift to your children, grandchildren or those who take over your garden in the future. ■

**Master Gardener Hotline Assignments  
for MAY**

Friday, May 1	Linda Fredrickson Paul Hutchins David Hutchinson (I)
Tuesday, May 5	Pam Crane Joan Woodward (I) Mike Lee (I)
Friday, May 8	Pat Anderson Susan McNeill (I) Nancy DeLouise (I)
Tuesday, May 12	Alberta Morgan Risi Thompson Mona Nelson (I)
Friday, May 15	Paul Hutchins Richard Hiss (I) Open (I)
Tuesday, May 19	Open Susan McNeill (I) Mike Lee (I)
Friday, May 22	Mary Thompson Velina Hames (I) Nancy DeLouise (I)
Tuesday, May 26	Ann Shine-Ring David Hutchinson (I) Open (I)
Friday, May 29	Bonnie Eisenberg Mona Nelson (I) Open (I)

**Master Gardener Hotline Assignments  
for JUNE**

Friday, June 2	Open Joan Woodward (I) Open (I)
Tuesday, June 5	Pat Anderson Nancy DeLouise (I) Mona Nelson (I)
Friday, June 9	Alberta Morgan Susan McNeill (I) Open (I)
Tuesday, June 12	Ann Shine-Ring David Hutchinson (I) Open (I)
Friday, June 16	Marti Taylor Terry McCatherin (I) Open (I)
Tuesday, June 19	Bonnie Eisenberg Richard Hiss (I) Open (I)
Friday, June 23	Open Mona Nelson (I) Open (I)
Tuesday, June 26	Ina Goldberg Mike Smith (I) Marcella Newman (I)
Friday, June 30	Pam Crane Dale Petzold (I) Open (I)

*\* Certified Master Gardeners' names shown in green*

**Thanks to Frank Connor for collecting the Hotline assignment information for the newsletter.**